

Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner consider claims to additional species in accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.141.

Claims 1, 11, 16, 17 and 22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Washkurak et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,704,050 ("Washkurak"). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1, 16 and 22 are supported by the disclosure of U.S. Provisional Application No. 60/125,255, filed March 19, 1999, from which the present application claims priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e). The filing date of the provisional application predates the April 23, 1999 filing date of Washkurak. Accordingly, Washkurak is not proper prior art to claims 1, 16 and 22.

Claims 11 and 17 depend from claims 1 and 16 and are also allowable over Washkurak.

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue.

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Respectfully submitted,

By 

Thomas J. D'Amico
Registration No. 28,371
Salvatore P. Tamburo
Registration No. 45,153
DICKSTEIN SHAPIRO MORIN &
OSHINSKY LLP
2101 L Street NW
Washington, DC 20037-1526
(202) 785-9700

Attorneys for Applicants